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Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations

Outsourcing practices

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted in compliance with resolution 55/232 of 23 December 2000.

The report contains information on progress achieved with regard to the implementation of the provisions of resolution 55/232, including information on location and type of outsourced activities and the reason therefor for the period from 1999 to present, as called for in paragraph 5 of the resolution.

The Secretary-General remains committed to ensuring that programme managers are guided by the principles for outsourcing as determined by the General Assembly.

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1. The present report on outsourcing activities is submitted in compliance with the request made by the General Assembly in paragraph 5 of its resolution 55/232. A list of outsourced activities from 1999 to 2001 is attached to the report as an annex. In this connection, it should be noted that outsourced activities during the three-year period have been compiled into a single listing with notations as to the planned duration of the activities, when and if applicable. This has been done so as to eliminate duplication through the production of multiple lists by year, given that most outsourced activities have a term in excess of one year.

2. Heads of departments and offices at United Nations Headquarters, offices away from Headquarters and United Nations funds and programmes were provided with the report of the Secretary-General on outsourcing practices (A/55/301) and resolution 55/232 and were instructed to ensure strict adherence to the criteria and requirements contained in those documents for any outsourced activities. In formulating the response to paragraph 5 of resolution 55/232, as attached to the present report, comments were elicited from the United Nations Office for Project Services, the United Nations Office at Geneva, the United Nations Office at Vienna, the United Nations Office at Nairobi, the United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations Institute for Training and Research, the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women, the Economic Commission for Africa, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, as well as departments and offices at United Nations Headquarters.

3. The organizations enumerated in the preceding paragraph and the departments and offices at United Nations Headquarters have reported that the outsourced activities contained in the annex followed the guidelines established in document A/55/301 and reaffirmed that the outsourced activities have been reviewed in the light of the criteria established in resolution 55/232 in their assessment of whether or not an activity of the Organization should be outsourced. In this connection, in those offices where the provision of security personnel was outsourced, the offices concerned have already initiated action to seek a budgetary allocation to replace contracted security personnel with staff members of the Organization so that the outsourced activities, which may compromise the safety and security of delegations, staff and visitors, will be phased out in due course.

4. The Secretary-General wishes to reiterate his commitment to ensuring that programme managers are guided by the four basic reasons and three significant goals as called for in the resolution and satisfy all of the criteria, including cost-effectiveness and efficiency, safety and security, maintaining the international character of the Organization and maintaining the integrity of procedures and process when programme managers consider whether or not to outsource an activity of the Organization.

Annex

Outsourced activities of the United Nations, 1999-2001

Location	*Type of activities*	*Reason for outsourcing*
United Nations, New York	Services for the management and operation of the United Nations gift centre	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization/ cost-efficiency
	News-stand operation	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization/ cost-efficiency
	Catering	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization/ cost-efficiency
	Landscaping services	Service not required on a permanent basis/cost-efficiency
	Supply, delivery and installation of carpet tiles at the UNHQ complex (2000-2001)	Service not required on a permanent basis/cost-efficiency
	Furniture refinishing services	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization/ cost-efficiency
	Personnel for conference room set-up	Cost-efficiency
	Personnel for garage administration	Cost-efficiency
	Custodial services	Cost-efficiency
	Painting of walls and ceiling	Services not required on a permanent basis/cost-efficiency
	Telecommunication and broadcasting operations and maintenance	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization/ cost-efficiency
	Messenger services for outlying buildings only (2001)	Cost-efficiency
	IMIS system design and development	Services not required on a permanent basis
	IMIS reports and development (1999-2000)	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization
	PC specialists and LAN technicians (1999-2000)	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization
	Computer help desk	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization/ cost-efficiency

Location	*Type of activities*	*Reason for outsourcing*
	Microsoft Office specialist services (1999-2000)	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization/ cost-efficiency
	Installation and technical support assistants	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization
	Facility management of optical disk system	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization
	Provision of telephone operator services	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization
	Provision of technicians to operate and maintain telephone equipment (1999-2000)	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization
	Provision of technicians to operate and maintain United Nations telephone exchange	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization
	Business analysis and re-engineering of processes (2001)	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization
	Development of workflows for the electronic processes (2001)	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization
	Scheduling project (2001)	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization
	Domino/Notes programming assistant (2001)	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization
	Lotus Notes e-mail operations (2001)	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization
	Lotus Notes R5 training (2001)	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization
	Functional and technical evaluation (2001)	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization
	Development of ICT standards (2001)	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization
	Typewriter repair (2001)	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization
	Macintosh technical support (2001)	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization
	Desktop hardware repair (2001)	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization
	LAN support personnel (2001)	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization
	CMS support personnel (2001)	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization
	Explosive detection canine services	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization
	Provision of freight forwarding and related services worldwide	Cost-efficiency

Location	*Type of activities*	*Reason for outsourcing*
	Provision of stationery and office supplies	Cost-efficiency
	Travel services	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization/ cost-efficiency
	Provision of travel and hotel booking services for annual spring meeting of Project LINK	Cost-efficiency
	Contractual translation services of parliamentary documents and publications into Chinese	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization/ cost-efficiency
	Translation services of parliamentary documents and publications into Russian	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization/ cost-efficiency
	Translation services of parliamentary documents and publications by individual contractors	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization/ cost-efficiency
	Printing services for United Nations documents, United Nations publications and other stationery items	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization/ cost-efficiency
	Hosting of a Lotus Note server/online databases for access by OCHA field offices	Cost-efficiency
	Information technology outreach service for integration of available geographic information	Cost-efficiency
UNFPA, New York	Printing services	No in-house capacity
	Legal services	No in-house capacity in real estate negotiation
	Mailing services	No in-house storage space/cost-efficiency
	Inspection and sampling services	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization
	Testing services	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization
United Nations, Geneva	Building cleaning	Included in lease agreement
	Catering services	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization/ cost-efficiency

Location	*Type of activities*	*Reason for outsourcing*
	Computer and printer maintenance (2000-2001)	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization/ cost-efficiency
	Photocopiers installation and maintenance	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization/ cost-efficiency
	Shuttle service	Cost-efficiency
	Temporary operations for conference rooms (2000-2001)	Service not required on a permanent basis
	Gardens and parks maintenance (2000-2001)	Service not required on a permanent basis
	Carpentry work (2000-2001)	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization/ service not required on a permanent basis
	Paint work (2000-2001)	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization/ service not required on a permanent basis
	Flooring work (2000-2001)	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization/ service not required on a permanent basis
UNHCR, Geneva	Global freight forwarding service	Cost-efficiency
	Air freight forwarding services ex Geneva	Cost-efficiency
	Mail services	Cost-efficiency
	Pouch services	Cost-efficiency
	Cleaning services	Cost-efficiency
United Nations, Vienna	Provision of office supplies for United Nations offices at Vienna and related services	Cost-efficiency
	Provision of corridor photocopying machines on a rental basis to all United Nations offices at Vienna	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization/ cost-efficiency
	Pouch processing	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization/ cost-efficiency
	Bulk mail processing	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization/ cost-efficiency

Location	*Type of activities*	*Reason for outsourcing*
	Travel services	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization/ cost-efficiency
	Equipment maintenance services	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization/ cost-efficiency
	Translation, revision and related typing services	Cost-efficiency/process overflow from in-house capacity and process jobs where no in-house expertise exists
	Typing/transcription services	Cost-efficiency/process overflow from in-house capacity and process jobs where no in-house expertise exists
	Editing services	Cost-efficiency/process overflow from in-house capacity and process jobs where no in-house expertise exists
	Copy preparation and typesetting services	Cost-efficiency/process overflow from in-house capacity and process jobs where no in-house expertise exists
	Proof-reading services	Cost-efficiency/process overflow from in-house capacity and process jobs where no in-house expertise exists
	Marketing services for UNPA philatelic products	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization
	Composition of philatelic journal and associated promotion activities	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization
	Translation of information materials into Eastern European languages, as needed basis	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization
	Printing of press kits, calendars and exhibition materials as special requirements arise	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization/ cost-efficiency
	Production of 3-4 minute videos from archival material (2000)	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization/ cost-efficiency
United Nations, Nairobi	Maintenance of United Nations complex	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization/ cost-efficiency
	Maintenance of computers, peripherals, typewriters, photocopiers, UPS, simultaneous interpretation and voting equipment	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization/ cost-efficiency

Location	*Type of activities*	*Reason for outsourcing*
	Storage and distribution of United Nations publications	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization/ cost-efficiency
	Remailing and pouch services	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization/ cost-efficiency
	Travel agency services	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization/ cost-efficiency
	Clearing and forwarding services	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization/ cost-efficiency
	Catering services	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization/ cost-efficiency
	United Nations commissary operations	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization/ cost-efficiency
	United Nations petrol station supply of fuel and operation	Cost-efficiency
	Transport to/from office of General Service staff	Cost-efficiency
	Computerized graphics work, translation, interpretation, report-writing, editing and typing services for conferences	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization/ cost-efficiency
	Computer training	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization/ cost-efficiency
	Lease of photocopiers	Cost-efficiency
United Nations, Addis Ababa	Provision of cafeteria, restaurant and bar services	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization/ cost-efficiency
	Information technology training workshops	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization/ cost-efficiency
	Travel management services	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization/ cost-efficiency
	Integrated library management system	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization/ cost-efficiency

Location	*Type of activities*	*Reason for outsourcing*
	Management service for office equipment	Technical skills not readily available in t[illegible]e Organization/ cost-efficiency
	Packing and removal of waste paper	Technical skills not readily available in t[illegible]e Organization/ cost-efficiency
United Nations, Bangkok	Catering services	Technical skills not readily available in t[illegible]e Organization/ cost-efficiency
	Cleaning/janitorial services	Technical skills not readily available in t[illegible]e Organization/ cost-efficiency
	Provision of engineering staff	Technical skills not readily available in t[illegible]e Organization/ cost-efficiency
	Security services	Technical skills not readily available in t[illegible]e Organization/ cost-efficiency/action initiated to seek b[illegible]dget to replace contracted personnel with staff
	Exhibition services	Technical skills not readily available in t[illegible]he Organization/ cost-efficiency
	Gardening services	Service not required on a permanent basi[illegible]s/cost-efficiency
	Provision of drivers	Cost-efficiency
	Provision of offset operators	Cost-efficiency
	Provision of mail room clerks	Cost-efficiency
	Provision of messenger services	Cost-efficiency
	Provision of draft person	Technical skills not readily available in t[illegible]he Organization/ cost-efficiency
	Provision of facilities management clerk	Technical skills not readily available in t[illegible]he Organization/ cost-efficiency
	Provision of computer technicians	Technical skills not readily available in t[illegible]he Organization/ cost-efficiency

Location	*Type of activities*	*Reason for outsourcing*
United Nations, Beirut	Provision of security personnel	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization/ cost-efficiency/action initiated to seek budget to replace contracted personnel with staff
	Provision of office support personnel such as messengers, manual labour, telephone operators, receptionists and nurse	Cost-efficiency
United Nations, Santiago	Security service	Cost-efficiency/action initiated to seek budget to replace contracted personnel with staff
	Garden maintenance	Cost-efficiency
	Internal messenger services	Cost-efficiency
	Cleaning services	Cost-efficiency
	Heating, ventilating and air conditioning maintenance	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization/ cost-efficiency
United Nations, Santo Domingo	Research and preparation of reports for INSTRAW	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization
	Editing, publishing and translation services for INSTRAW	Technical skills not readily available in the Organization/ cost-efficiency